



# Citadel Of Faith Covenant Church

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ALPHA AND OMEGA

As we turn to yet another chapter in Revelation chapter 9, we also turn our attention to what we are called the “three woes” (Rev. 8:13). Rev. 9:1 opens with the fifth angel sounding the trumpet and then John notices a “star” that falls from the sky to earth. The term “star” has many symbolic references in scripture. Some of the designations of “star” are: 1) a prominent person (Num. 24:17), 2) Satan (Is. 14:12-17), 3) Angelic beings (Job. 38:7) to human leaders of churches (Rev. 1:20) or even to Christ [the “bright morning star” (Rev. 22:16)]. The most logical understanding based on context would be that this is a high ranking angel who has been given authority over the abyss. We notice in Rev. 9:1 that this “star” has been given a key to open up the abyss. In verse two when he opened the abyss (which was bottomless), a smoke rose from it like the smoke from a huge incinerator. I take road trips and sometimes will pass oil refineries or huge factories and notice the smoke that will come from their furnaces which almost create a fog which covers the sky. Well, this is what occurred as the abyss was opened. The smoke (which is normally contained in the abyss) is not released. As it ascends, it darkens both the sun and the sky. Remember in chapter eight, the fire which hit the earth and burned up a third of all trees including ALL grass had already created smoke which covered the atmosphere. Now, we notice that there is yet another layer of smoke which blocks the sun and sky...this that comes from the abyss. As if this were not bad enough, what comes out of this smoke from the abyss is even worse! Rev. 9:3 tells us that the smoke contained within it locusts which had the same properties of scorpions. These scorpions were given command to not harm any of the grass, plants or trees, but instead they were told to only harm the people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. Where connection to Christ in the past produced persecution, suffering and martyrdom; now identity with Christ produces divine protection. Rev. 9:5 mentions that these scorpion like locusts were not allowed to kill their victims, but instead to allow them to suffer for the span of five months. The effects of the locusts stings were similar to those of a scorpion sting. Some of the effects of just one scorpion sting are: severe pain, numbness and tingling, swelling, difficulty breathing, unusual head, neck and eye movements, drooling, sweating, nausea and vomiting, high blood pressure, accelerated heart rate, and restlessness. These are the symptoms from just one sting of a scorpion can you imagine months of a plague of locusts released whose sole mission is to attack non-believers?



The result of this global plague is mankind's desire to die! Rev. 9:6 tells us that people will long for death, but will not find it. These unbelievers will not be able to even find escape from death. Just as the martyrs had no choice of life because of their connection with Christ. We now see unbelievers not having the pleasure of death because of their dis-connection with Christ! We then notice a detailed description of how these "locusts" looked.

Like horses prepared for battle (9: 7) Crowns like gold on their heads (9: 7) Human-like faces (9: 7) Hair like women (9: 8) Teeth like lions (9: 8) Breastplates like iron (9: 9) Sound of wings like horses and chariots (9: 9) Tails like scorpions (9: 10) I had a conversation with a member who asked about a very untraditional view of what the "fruit" was which Eve gave to Adam. It was a comparison I had heard before, but it had absolutely no Biblical reference and was simply an attempt to read a bit more into what the "fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil". I responded to her that we have to be very careful to not make something be what we would like it to be or even what makes sense to us. We have to take the scripture as it is stated. What we do know is that these are supernatural beings (they are released from the abyss). They are locusts in their overall appearance although they have a scorpion stinger. We then see verses 7-10 which gives us some examples of their look. We see much symbolism in Revelation. As opposed to trying to see these locusts with our natural eyes, we need to know that they are demonic agents led by the leader who is called in verse eleven as the Destroyer. These are warriors who have intelligence, strategy, and unusual power. Humanity will not escape their terror.

We mentioned once before the importance of knowing that Satan is only granted power to do what God allows Him to do. This abyss that is opened and this "Angel of the Abyss/Destroyer" is given charge by Christ and the sounding of this trumpet for judgment to hit the earth. Jesus allows this destroyer to do His bidding. God uses everything to achieve His ultimate purposes. This is the first of the three woes that's mentioned in Rev. 8:13.

### Questions to Ponder

1. Give some Biblical examples of God using Satan, evil, plagues, examples of God allowing suffering to further His ultimate plan.
2. How hard is it to see God using hardship to bring us closer to Him?
3. What would you do if you actually saw these things playing out in our life-time?
4. How is Rev. 9 a display of God's love for the world?
5. Who are the ones who have been given the "seal" of God on their foreheads.
6. Will those who don't have the seal, but come to Christ during this tribulation be spared from the judgment? Why/why not?
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